
INSTITUTIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Thursday, May 12, 2022 9 a.m.–Noon

Truckee Meadows Community College via Zoom

Call to Order: 9 a.m.

1. Roll Call

Present: Chair BJ North, Vice Chair Nancy McCormick; Council members: Marisa Brown, Edward Estipona, Milton Stewart, Joseph Nannini.

Guests: Craig Madole, Nevada AGC; Interim Vice Chancellor Renée Davis, NSHE.

Ex Officio Members: Cheryl Cardoza, Nevada Faculty Alliance (NFA) Representative; Tina May, Classified Council President; Dr. Mindy Lokshin, TMCC Foundation President; Dr. Virginia Irintcheva, Faculty Senate Chair.

Staff: President Karin Hilgersom; Vice President of Student Services and Diversity, Estela Gutierrez; Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Jeff Alexander; Associate Vice President Elena Bubnova; Dean of Life Sciences, Allied Health, and Public Safety, Dr. Julie Ellsworth; Dean of Liberal Arts, Dr. Natalie Brown; Executive Director of Facilities and Capital Planning, Dr. Ayodele Akinola; Interim Dean, Technical Sciences Kreg Mebust; Interim Director, Adult Basic Education Cynthia Pierrott; Program Director, Career Hub Sidney Sullivan; TMCC Foundation Executive Director Gretchen Sawyer; Administrative Assistant Krystyna Sokowski.

Absent: Eric Brown, Robert Chisel, Dr. Sesh Commuri, Joseph Greco, Jennifer Kenney, Kris McLean, Steve Reid.

2. Public Comment

Chair North called for public comment. There was none, public comment was closed.

3. Approval of Minutes – November 5, 2021

Minutes from the February 25, 2022 meeting were unable to be approved due to lack of quorum; minutes will be approved next meeting.

4. Chair's Update Including, but Not Limited to:

a) Introduction of New Members

Though there were no new IAC members, Chair North welcomed Craig Madole as a guest, who introduced himself and his role as CEO at the Nevada chapter of the Associated General Contractors, a non-profit trade association. President Hilgersom added that she and Dr. Alexander both had a productive meeting with Craig and would welcome him as a formal member of the council if he so wished to join.

5. President's Update

a) March NSHE BOR Recap

President Hilgersom was pleased to report the March Board of Regents meeting was a positive one for TMCC. Five tenure-track faculty officially received tenure this year, student Cassandra Barber received the Sam Lieberman Regent's Award, \$4 mil in gifts for the William S. Pennington Health Science Center were accepted from several sources, and TMCC also received a \$2 mil federal appropriation with help from Senators Cortez Masto and Rosen, as well as Representative Amodei. The appropriation will help with program expansion. The annual athletic report was also presented at the meeting by Interim Director Hawkins and was also positive. TMCC received approval to offer an Associate of Science degree in Data Science. Most important was the approval of the Bachelor's degree in Architecture, which will be the only bachelor's program in architecture available in northern Nevada. The President also discussed the March special Board meeting, where Chancellor Melody Rose resigned and the board appointed Vice Chancellor Crystal Abba as Officer-In-Charge; Chair McAdoo hopes to appoint an interim Chancellor for the remainder of the legislative session. The NSHE budget, planning, and prioritization office will be working with benefits and salaries, and the President noted the importance of those to keeping personnel at TMCC. The President also discussed the need for restoration of budget cuts and an influx of funds, and expressed her hopes for a fund to help keep programs running and allow TMCC to fulfill all its expectations. Finally, the President briefly covered the AB450 committee meeting and its plans for workforce development.

b) EastView advocacy updates

EastView animation is being revamped with new script and talking points; work on the project continues, but TMCC cannot move forward without a significant investment from the State of \$30 million.

c) TMCC Commencement

Commencement is the 20th of May; five walkthrough ceremonies will take place that day as COVID remains on the rise. It begins at 10 am and concludes at 3:45 pm, with a different ceremony for each department.

d) Tenure

Chair North followed the President's update with a desire to congratulate the five professors who received tenure as it is a very difficult process and a remarkable achievement. She added that it would be beneficial to persuade legislative bodies to re-invest resources into TMCC when meeting and talking with legislative members and trying to explain to them the importance of helping TMCC accomplish its goals. Chair North also urged members to participate in a commencement event if possible.

6. Updates

a) Vice Chancellor of Community College Updates – Interim Vice Chancellor Renée Davis

Interim Vice Chancellor Davis provided the update. The IAC handbook revision will be going to the June BOR meeting; a letter of support is included in the revision. The intention of the revision is to help institutions to have more control to shape the IAC in the way they need, and all presidents are supportive of the revision. Vice Chancellor Davis also discussed the AB450 meeting as well, reporting on the workforce incentive grant (WIG) presentation. It will hopefully help reach populations of students that are not being reached and targets specific occupations as well as need-based students. The proposal is to start the program in Spring 2023. The program will go hand in hand with the workforce investment fund (WIF), because the workforce investment fund can be used to build capacity and gain the funding needed to support the workforce programs.

Chair North thanked the Interim Vice Chancellor for being at the meeting and for helping TMCC to build for the future and attain the funds necessary for the growing programs the college has and will have.

b) Faculty Senate – Virginia Irintcheva

Dr. Irintcheva reported the Faculty Senate has one meeting remaining; they worked this year to improve performance evaluation forms and worked with administration to increase budget transparency and plan a salary equity study. They also worked with the NFA to provide input on contract negotiations when requested. Dr. Irintcheva attended a meeting of the Council of Chairs in April on the nomination of the Interim Chair; the council was concerned that there was no clear process for how Chancellor McAdoo will select the Interim Chair, as well as the loss of NSHE cabinet members and the Board's continued ability to represent college interests in the coming legislative session. Dr. Irintcheva will be resigning as chair following the final meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Chair North thanked Dr. Irintcheva for her work as the chair of the Faculty Senate.

c) Classified Council – Tina May

Tina May summarized the Classified Council report. The Easter Egg hunt had over 60 children attend; it was held in the Student Center to great success. The Classified Council is filling positions for next year, and Sarah Gill, Vice President of the Classified Council, won the Classified Employee of the Year Award. The next Classified Council meeting will be May 18th. Tina will continue as Classified Council President.

d) Student Government Association – Darian Richards

While Darian was not present for the meeting, Chair North had her report and thanked the SGA for their hard work and engagement with the college. Dr. Hilgersom also commented on how many students ran for SGA positions this year, pointing out that it speaks to a desire to engage with on-campus activities; she also mentioned the new SGA president, John Fenton, and added that Darian was not present because she started a full-time job, and that her hard work helped TMCC greatly over the year.

7. Presentation & Discussion: Snapshot of TMCC Apprenticeships and Internship Options

a) Interim Director of Adult Basic Education & EPIC – Cynthia Pierrott

Cynthia introduced the presentation with a discussion on pre-apprenticeships for Adult Basic Education students. The pre-apprenticeship programs will give ABE students the chance to prepare for a registered apprenticeship, certificate or degree program, or job in the field. They are 8 week workshops in soft skills, workplace skills and academic skills. The program is called ExceleRate Nevada; the content was developed with the Nevada Department of Labor and focuses on ensuring competency in the workplace. It will focus on the healthcare, IT, manufacturing and logistics, hospitality and skilled trade industries.

b) Interim Dean of Technical Sciences – Kreg Mebust

Kreg discussed registered apprenticeships. These are mentored, on-the-job structured learning that is federally registered, and is designed for 18+ year old students. They take 1 – 5 years, and pay increases are available as well as transferrable occupational credentials. Trade union apprenticeships allow students to take trade courses as well as gen ed courses, and multiple certificates and degrees are available through these programs. There are also non-union apprenticeships from companies such as Panasonic, Tesla and SK Food Group.

c) Dean of Life Sciences, Allied Health & Public Safety – Julie Ellsworth

Julie discussed for-credit and non-credit healthcare apprenticeships. Both have been assisted with grant dollars to cover tuition for entry-level pathways like the CNA and EMT programs. TMCC is working with Renown to help their employees become CNAs as a way of encouraging current employees to gain certifications. The Medical Assistant and Pharmacy Technician programs are both small scale training intended to help students go directly into the workforce. 129 students have gone through the healthcare apprenticeship programs in the last year. These programs help employees take classes with the promise of a job at the end, often with their current employer.

d) Career Hub Manager – Sidney Sullivan

Sidney covered internships. The TMCC internship programs are designed to give students work experience related to their field of study; they are shorter than apprenticeships, usually one semester long, and have varied credits, as well as being repeatable. Most are paid, and all are for credit. They are collaborations between the student, employer and Career Hub as well as a faculty member. Students must have a 2.5 GPA or higher and be within the last two semesters of completion of their academic goal. Programs include paralegal, bookkeeping, diesel, HVAC, auto, welding, culinary, logistics and others, and they can do an internship in nearly any subject. Challenges include that the internships are considered electives, a signed liability agreement is required, and the internship coordinator position is vacant and will remain so until Fall 2023. There is an employer solutions hotline Sidney manages for employers wanting information on setting up internships.

e) EDAWN – Nancy McCormick

Nancy asked about whether the pre-apprenticeship program is being offered through the EPIC program for no credit, and what could be done to promote those services to employers and increase awareness of the programs. Cynthia responded that connection with employers is something they are focusing on, especially working with WCSD to help groups with high dropout rates to get their GEDs while completing internships that will result in jobs following completion. Tesla is also interested in more customized internships. Nancy added EDAWN is happy to help promote all these programs and help increase visibility.

f) Edward Estipona

Edward asked Chair North how TMCC is recruiting for participants for these programs, in particular for healthcare fields. Julie responded that the healthcare industry comes with certain challenges, and the pandemic has created some reluctance towards the industry. The healthcare employers have to work jointly with TMCC; there is some coordination involved, but the targeted audiences are a challenge, especially high school students. Edward mentioned that working with organizations to reach high school students with the help of the private sector through a sponsorship program may be a viable path forward. Julie added that wage challenges are a major factor with healthcare fields, and if the job is not a significant financial gain, recruitment will remain difficult. Edward offered to help with these challenges. Julie added that the numbers given were only for apprenticeships, and there are other programs that are unpaid and a more traditional path to employment, but many students are only able to complete a program if they are paid since they are supporting themselves. Kreg also mentioned that the technical sciences advisory boards work with the private sector in the classroom to approach students and address issues, and they have good mechanisms in place.

g) Marissa Brown

Marissa was concerned that nursing was not mentioned under the apprenticeship programs. Julie responded that nursing students do participate in nursing apprenticeships at the end of their training and as such it is not part of recruitment. The apprenticeship programs mentioned are grant-funded; the money available to these programs is for short, entry-level programs, and the eligible programs lead directly to a job at a higher wage after one or two semesters.

h) Karin Hilgersom

Dr. Hilgersom commented that the internship numbers are small, and she asked Dr. Alexander why more degree programs don't have internship. Dr. Alexander responded that there are other co-curricular learning opportunities that are not part of these formal apprenticeship programs but are a part of many degree programs, either through presentations of industry professionals in the classroom or students going out into the field. Since these apprenticeships require funding, the informal experiences students get in classes are a good way for them to get experience without needing additional funding. Sidney Sullivan gave a brief history of the internships; during the 2008 recession, internships were an elective because employers couldn't offer internships and this prevented students from graduating, so the only program that requires an internship now is bookkeeping. Also, many students can do their internships at their current employer; having to add an internship can be a time requirement students cannot handle, and having it be optional helps. Edward Estipona added that the data from these internships should be collected. Sidney responded that this data is collected, such as if students were working in a place where they completed an internship or if they were hired after, and the reason the data isn't available is that the internship coordinator retired last year. Edward said he greatly appreciates what the team does. Nancy McCormick added that EDAWN collects some of that data as well and it is being tracked with the intent of adding more employers.

i) BJ North

Chair North concluded with several suggestions of ideas for the IAC to reach out to companies in regards to internships. Julie Ellsworth mentioned lack of financial aid can be a roadblock for students and grants can help mitigate that. Chair North had additional recommendations for the community members of the IAC to work in tandem with TMCC to accomplish these goals. Milton Stewart added that his organization also has several resources available that could help students and help with internships, and NevadaWorks will continue to advocate for TMCC's internship programs.

8. Listening Session:

a) IAC Council Member Take-Aways

Chair North introduced the listening session and asked council members to share something they learned or took away from the meeting.

Nancy McCormick mentioned that her Nevada Promise mentee was unable to get an internship due to lack of real-world experience, and she was able to give him a mock interview to help him be more prepared and have more confidence for his next internship interview; mock interviews could be a way to help students find internships.

Edward Estipona added that the definitions for apprenticeships and internships can be confusing and vague for employers and students, and using more unified language and clearer definitions may help students and employers understand their purpose and what the programs entail better. Nancy McCormick agreed that the branding of the programs needs more consistency. Milton Stewart added that the Nevada Department of Labor has standardized definitions of these programs that may be beneficial as well.

Dr. Hilgersom concluded with a message that workplace experience will be vital in the coming years in higher education, and internship and apprenticeship programs need to be evaluated to make them a larger part of college programs.

Chair North ended with statements about how to entice students into less flashy careers and how to sell different industries, as well as the importance of helping show employers how to train individuals into being full time personnel, and that there are significant challenges still to address and overcome. She also emphasized the importance of the IAC in spreading these ideas when out in the business world.

11. New Business

Edward Estipona mentioned the importance of training people to work from home as the work world shifts to having more WFH personnel, and suggested finding a way to add that into curriculum in some way. Chair North concurred. Nancy McCormick asked the IAC to consider a presentation from Milton Stewart as CEO of NevadaWorks on the new ideas he is implementing with his organization, which Milton agreed with.

12. Public Comment

Chair North called for public comment, there was none. Public comment was closed.

13. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.